

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 58

April 6, 2000, 11:08 a.m.
Page S-2277 Temp. Record

BUDGET RESOLUTION/Oil Revenues from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 2001-2005 . . . S. Con. Res. 101. Murkowski motion to table the Roth amendment No. 2955.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 51-49

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. Con. Res. 101, the Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 2001-2005: will set total spending at \$1.829 trillion and total revenues at \$2.003 trillion; will cut the debt held by the public (money that the Federal Government owes to creditors other than itself) by \$174 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2001 and by \$996 billion over the next 5 years; will fully fund Medicare (all of the President's proposed \$14 billion in Medicare provider cuts were rejected); will set aside \$40 billion for FYs 2001-2005 in a reserve fund for legislation to comprehensively reform Medicare while providing seniors with a prescription drug benefit; will save the entire \$976 billion in Social Security trust fund surpluses over the next 5 years for debt reduction and will enforce those savings through a 60-vote point of order; will ensure a non-Social Security budget surplus for the third year in a row (which will mark the first time since 1947-49 that the Federal budget has been balanced for 3 years running); will provide for \$13 billion in tax relief for FY 2001 and \$150 billion over the next 5 years (which will be sufficient relief to address the marriage penalty tax, to provide increased health care access to the uninsured, to adopt small-employer tax relief, and to expand educational opportunities); will adhere to the FY 2001 discretionary caps of \$578 billion in outlays but will establish a mechanism to adjust these statutory caps to \$623 billion; will create a firewall to protect the defense budget from being raided for other spending; and will create new points of order to limit advance appropriations, delayed obligations, and the use of the emergency spending designation for non-emergency spending.

The Roth amendment would strike the assumed revenue of \$1.2 billion for FY 2005 to be gained from leasing for oil exploration and production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

After debate, Senator Murkowski moved to table the Roth amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

(See other side)

YEAS (51)			NAYS (49)			NOT VOTING (0)	
Republicans (47 or 85%)	Democrats (4 or 9%)		Republicans (8 or 15%)	Democrats (41 or 91%)		Republicans (0)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Helms	Akaka	Chafee	Baucus	Kerrey		
Allard	Hutchinson	Breaux	Collins	Bayh	Kerry		
Ashcroft	Hutchison	Inouye	Fitzgerald	Biden	Kohl		
Bennett	Inhofe	Moynihan	Jeffords	Bingaman	Landrieu		
Bond	Kyl		Lugar	Boxer	Lautenberg		
Brownback	Lott		Roth	Bryan	Leahy		
Bunning	Mack		Smith, Bob	Byrd	Levin		
Burns	McCain		Snowe	Cleland	Lieberman		
Campbell	McConnell			Conrad	Lincoln		
Cochran	Murkowski			Daschle	Mikulski		
Coverdell	Nickles			Dodd	Murray		
Craig	Roberts			Dorgan	Reed		
Crapo	Santorum			Durbin	Reid		
DeWine	Sessions			Edwards	Robb		
Domenici	Shelby			Feingold	Rockefeller		
Enzi	Smith, Gordon			Feinstein	Sarbanes		
Frist	Specter			Graham	Schumer		
Gorton	Stevens			Harkin	Torricelli		
Gramm	Thomas			Hollings	Wellstone		
Grams	Thompson			Johnson	Wyden		
Grassley	Thurmond			Kennedy			
Gregg	Voinovich						
Hagel	Warner						
Hatch							

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

In 1980 Congress set aside 19 million acres as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), which is an area equal to the size of Maine. Of that acreage, 8 million acres were designated as wilderness. Within the 11 million acres which were not designated as wilderness, Congress set aside 1.5 million acres for study for their potential for oil and gas production. If ANWR oil production is permitted, within that 1.5 million acres, the "footprint" of the proposed oil development will be a minuscule 2,000 acres. In other words, less than 1 out of 9,000 acres of ANWR will be affected by oil drilling, and none of those acres will be in areas designated as wilderness. Further, for those Senators who may have been gulled into believing the nonsense about the 8 million acres of ANWR which are designated as wilderness as being the last great wilderness area in the United States, we inform them that Alaska itself has a total of 56 million acres of designated wilderness.

Thirty-five years ago, Congress approved oil development on Alaska's North Slope (Prudhoe Bay). The technology used in that development is archaic compared to what is available today. At the time, we heard the same ecological babble about how oil drilling and an oil pipeline in Alaska would cause irreparable damage that we are hearing today in the debate on ANWR. After 35 years of experience, we have found out that not a single dire prediction of the environmentalists has come true. The tiny footprint of development in Prudhoe Bay and from the pipeline proved helpful for wildlife where it had any effect at all. Nesting behavior did not change for waterfowl as predicted, nor did predators change their hunting patterns, despite the expectations of so many self-anointed experts. The species we heard most about before allowing that exploration, caribou, actually benefitted from the pipeline. The total number of caribou has increased by over 600 percent. Instead of refusing to go near the pipeline, they like to use it for shade in the summer and warmth in the winter. For Eskimos it has meant jobs and access to amenities that all other Americans have taken for granted for decades, and at the same time it has not proved harmful to the land that they love. The Native Americans in ANWR are consequently strongly in favor of oil production.

Our colleagues have grossly underestimated the value of developing ANWR. We remind them that the Prudhoe Bay field has provided 25 percent of America's oil for more than 20 years. To date, it has provided over 12 billion barrels of oil. Production is beginning to decline from this field and will last for another decade, perhaps two. America is now 56-percent dependent on foreign oil. Without Prudhoe Bay, it will be 75- to 80-percent dependent. At the time of the Arab oil embargo, the United States was only 36-percent dependent but it was nearly crippled by that embargo, and every Senator realizes that the Persian Gulf War, which cost the United States tens of billions of dollars to fight, had quite a bit to do with protecting its Mid-East oil supply. Still, this Administration allows a foreign oil cartel, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), that is based in the Mideast to fix oil prices while denying the United States any opportunities to counter those prices with domestic oil.

With these facts in mind, we inform our colleagues that the Department of Interior has estimated that the ANWR oil field that we want to open for exploration and production might have as much as 9.2 billion barrels of commercially recoverable oil, the same original estimate as was made for Prudhoe Bay. That amount is nearly equal to the amount that has come from the North Slope. No other United States' territory has as much potential for oil development. We are frankly sickened by the fact that Senators would deny Americans the right to have access to this potential oil field. Balance of trade considerations, the economic devastation that may come from future embargoes, the tragic loss of life that may come from future wars, and the 75,000 high-paying jobs that would be created to develop this oil field do not seem to concern them. They dismiss these basic economic facts out of hand and cling to their theories of ecological harm despite the fact that 35 years of experience prove them wrong.

We do not dismiss facts so lightly. Senators can give us all the sanctimonious speeches about alternate energy and the need to conserve fuel that they want, but the fact remains that America is dependent on oil and most of that oil is foreign. The leases our colleagues want to block are in the public interest. Without ANWR, their speeches will not change the fact that our dependence on foreign oil will increase tremendously. ANWR is our best immediate option to lessen foreign oil dependence. We urge Senators to take that option by rejecting the Roth amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

The budget resolution before us assumes that revenue will be gained from ANWR oil and gas leases. We are strongly opposed to this assumption, because we strongly oppose any oil and gas development in ANWR's 1.5 million acres of pristine wilderness. Though Republicans may claim that their proposal will allow gas exploration in only a small percentage of the acreage, any exploration will be devastating to ANWR's entire fragile ecosystem. In 1987, the Interior Department submitted a report to Congress detailing the long-term changes that might result in the wilderness environment, wildlife habitat, and Native subsistence hunting opportunities if oil exploration were allowed. ANWR, we inform our colleagues, is the calving ground for the great Porcupine Caribou herd, is the denning area for the Beaufort Sea polar bear population, and is the nesting habitat for a variety of waterfowl and shorebirds. In total, it is home to 165 animal species. If oil is found, at most there will be enough to meet our country's total energy needs for only 6 months. When the oil is gone, the United States will be no less dependent on foreign sources of oil. Looking for oil in ANWR is thus a very short-term fix. The solutions to our energy problems must be found in conservation and renewable energy, not in desperate searches for more oil. Oil spills and the environmental degradation that are byproducts of oil development could do irreversible damage to ANWR's ecosystems. Also, the culture of the Gwich'in Indians could be destroyed. This policy is very shortsighted. Therefore, we have proposed the Roth amendment, which would block oil and gas leases in ANWR. We urge our colleagues to support this amendment.